

REMARKS

Claims 7-13 and 15 are now present in this application.

The specification and claims 7 and 15 have been amended, and claims 1-6 and 14 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 6 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over BATES et al., U.S. Patent 6,367,074. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over BATES et al. and VINEYARD, Jr. et al., U.S. Patent 6,727,920. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 7-10, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over BATES et al. and COLE et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0152372. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over BATES et al., COLE et al., and VINEYARD Jr. et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that the Examiner considers claims 14 and 15 to contain allowable subject matter. Without conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, but simply to expedite prosecution of this application, it is noted that claims 1-6 have been cancelled, and the limitations of objected-to but allowable claim 14 have been incorporated into

independent claim 7. Accordingly, all claims should automatically be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

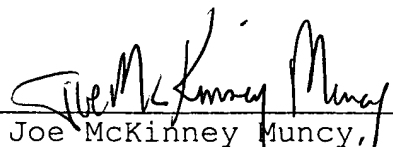
Because the additional prior art cited by the Examiner has been included merely to show the state of the prior art and has not been utilized to reject the claims, no further comments concerning these documents are considered necessary at this time.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
Joe McKinney Muncy, #32,334

KM/asc
3313-0400P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000